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a commission or made to sell, but simply a labor of love and to please himself.

There are in this painting breadth and distinction and the love of nature. Handsome though not rich in color, it is true to facts; and if at the present time one rarely sees any more the tall smoke-stack that forms so vigorous a mark in these shifting curtains of smoke and mist, yet the "big tows" still enchant the children along the Hudson and help to animate the noble estuary-river.

Mr. Colman looks to be a man about sixty summers as you see him walking alert and observant about Central Park. He has, however, a whim of claiming a much greater age—the preposterous claim of eighty-five! And somebody appears to

have helped him to doctor all the books, for the Academy of Design makes him Associate in 1854 and Academician in 1862, and "Who's Who" aids the joke by stating that he was born in Portland, Maine in 1832! So he can cite authorities who bear him out.

He was the first President of the American Water Color Society in 1866 and his paintings may be found in New York at the Metropolitan Museum, Public Library and Union League Club, and in Chicago at the Art Institute. He is a worthy comrade of George Inness, Sanford R. Gifford, Wyant and Thomas Moran—to mention only a few of the Hudson River school past and present.

## MORE BEWILDERMENT IN THE WORLD OF ART

WHEN we calmly survey the condition of life and the mental processes of many men who assume to be leaders of thought in the field of metaphysics, science and æsthetics, we are tempted to say that the Lord is as wroth as he was at the building of the Tower of Babel and, therefore, is again punishing men by bewildering them and reducing them to a state of intellectual disintegration, forcing each one to run about in a different direction like a lot of frightened ants. This wrath of the Lord seems to have been aroused in Him by the aggressive dissatisfaction with the unavoidable monotony of things in this life manifested by certain insolent "leaders of thought" who impertinently insulted the Lord—by ridiculing His way of running the universe.

And so, in order to cure His bumptious critics—some of whom were vicious enough to pray—"Oh Lord help us to invent a new vice!"—He resolved to smite enough of these "leaders of thought" with the disease of "ego-mania," which would lead these selfish egotists to muddle things up so much on this earth that common-sense should finally be forced to come to the rescue and, in self-defense, snuff out these ego-maniacs.

The result is every selfish egotist became a member of the party called the "individualists." This party still teaches that each man should have his pedestal in the summer-sun from which he should perforce spout and say: "Gentlemen, I am here!" And when it was found that there were not enough pedestals to go around, those who had the largest attack of ego-mania resorted to all sorts of charlatan tricks to advertise themselves or their art: this painter painted a licentious picture; that sculptor carved an erotic statue; that dramatist wrote a sex-drama; this novelist wrote an immoral love story; that would-be painter invented a sample of kaleidoscopic "cubism" or lascivious "futurism" all for no other reason than to make themselves singular and talked about—praised or condemned, it did not matter—so long as they were "advertised" and sold their wares. The result is a startling increase of Jeckyl- and Mr. Hyde-ism, of mephistophic degenerates,—physical, intellectual and spiritual—but above all of that most dangerous class of all which is three-fourths sane and one-fourth insane. Our asylums are increasingly filled with this latter class of persons, both male and female.

Such men may arrive as newcomers in New York City and mount on their pedestal and announce their presence and descant in corruscating phrases with a logic that is almost perfect, and convincing enough to almost convert the public to their new-fangled "up-to-date modernism," when suddenly, at the end of their harangue, they will say something that will prove that they are after all really mentally incompetent—their insanity breaking through their apparently sane mental processes, like the moon through a rift in the clouds—like the man who, having complained of being falsely incarcerated in an asylum, reasoned so clearly with the judicial investigating committee that the committee had decided, in form, to vote for his release, when suddenly he kicked the chairman of the committee in the shins and laughed at the commission with a blasphemous scorn. He was not liberated!

When the "New Republic" appeared in New York much was expected from it. It gave much—for a time. But lately, either because it needed the profitable friendship of the degenerate ego-maniacs and charlatans in the world of art, or because its writers on art have joined the ego-maniacs referred to above it now seems to lean towards what it calls "modern" art meaning "modernistic" art—and evidently not knowing the difference.

An article in its issue of May the 5th, entitled "Art and Common-Sense" was so attractive that we were allured to read it. It began well, became better until we felt that here the American forces of common-sense and decency, with a moderate respect at least for sanity and morals, had an ally in their campaign against vulgar ugliness, dementia and sexomania in art, and we began to rejoice. The philosophy and spirit of that article is worthy of a Taine, a Vèron, almost of a Tolstoi in its refined argument against extreme "individualism," excessivism and charlatanism in art. The triumph of common-sense seemed to be advancing rapidly. But suddenly we reached this phrase:

"Most painters have very moderate intelligence, and the inventions that they have latterly made to give an outlet to the ego that to them seemed struggling for utterance have been pathetic in their vacuous futility. It is indeed striking that the only painter of really superior intelligence that I have ever known, that is, Matisse! would have none of this and was content to strive merely for

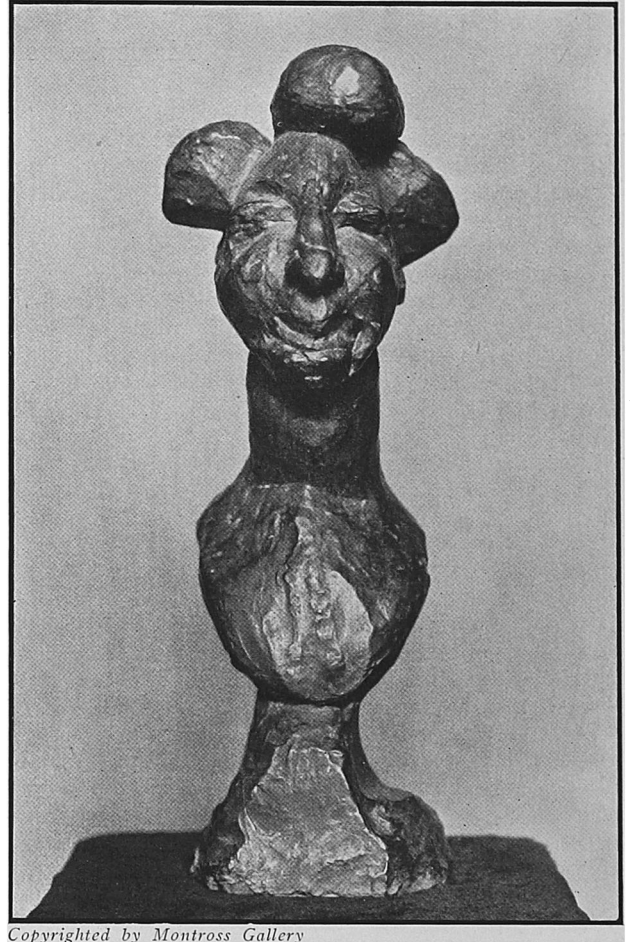


A DEGENERATE PORTRAIT  
BY MATISSE

expression. He always knew the thing he wanted to say though he often had to struggle terribly to get it said. He did not have to bother about his integrity, because for him as for all other honest laborers the job was definitely before him. The other men who, unlike him, were so constantly concerned to be themselves at any cost, were driven in most cases to invented conceits which were mere delusive substitutes for genuine expression."

We subjoin two of Matisse's "works" and ask the reader if the perpetrator of these degenerate creations is worthy of being called "the only painter of *really superior intelligence*," by a man presuming to talk about art and common-sense in a journal which, like the "New Republic," pretends to lead in thought? Are we not justified in saying that the critic who will eulogize the author of these intellectually degenerate creations is also tainted with intellectual dementia?

In another article, in the issue of April 28th, 1917, in which another writer, in heavy, involved, stylistic style babbles about "irrelevant art" we find this: "There remains a deep dissatisfaction for an American who craves æsthetic vitality in this country." This writer has evidently been hypnotized by the mephistophelian managers of the mercenary "modernistic" movement in art who, every now and then, fabricate a new slogan—in order to captivate weak thinkers and so re-energize their game of bewildering the public in order to continue their exploiting it. The latest of these is: "Art must be vital!" But apparently they have neither the power nor the will to explain what they mean by "vital art."



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AN IMBECILE BRONZE PORTRAIT  
BY MATISSE

This magazine is saying in every issue, in clear, unpretentious, unstylistic English what *it* considers vital art, what makes a work vital and what is vital to its endurance as a work of art and makes it also help in the work of preserving as much civilization as is vital to the race!

Does the writer we refer to know what he means by "*æsthetic vitality*"? We will wager a pound of good dates he does not know.

Further does he know what he means by this: "Where can we breathe the larger air of American art?" Will he kindly instruct our public where is to be seen the American art with a "larger air"? To us "larger air" is rather airy, vapid, punky thinking.

If these would-be smart writers can not write in plain English, let them confine themselves to talking about Usertasenism or Tolteciana—neither of which is "a living and vital expression"—to quote them once more. Let them keep out of the field of really vital art in which the public above all needs clarity, sanity and decency and not a mass of empty, piffle palaver, mere sound without fury, but surely signifying nothing!

